

# The Latest In Celebrations—The Electrical Fourth

By CHARLES N. LURIE.

**THE Electrical Fourth!**  
The latest thing in Fourth! Not the boom, but the rocket, but press the button, flash and illumination of the incandescent light.

That's the program as arranged by the progressives. Little Willie and Mary will leave the scene of celebration with eyes filled with the beauties of light instead of with gunpowder. Papa and mamma will take little Willie and Mary home in an unimpaired condition. The ground will be strewn with papers and peanut shells, perhaps, but not with eyes and limbs. Which will be well.

The electrical Fourth of July as planned by the authorities of New York and other cities will be a thing of beauty as well as of safety. Varicolored lights, arranged in artistic designs, will flash out to Young America their messages of patriotism and devotion to one's country. Houses, arches, bridges and other edifices, as well as trees, will be outlined in red, white and blue, affording topics for comment to crowds of admiring spectators.

New York, with its "Great White way" that is the amazement and delight of out of town visitors, knows well how to arrange incandescent lights in lines and masses that appeal to the senses of form and color. With the current's "winking" motion is well simulated, and what can be prettier, for example, than a huge American flag made of varicolored lights, with the stripes waving and the stars blinking in an effect utterly gorgeous?

**Electrical Fireworks.**  
Then there are, of course, the fireworks effects. It is not beyond the ingenuity of electrical engineers and the sign designers to imitate the flight of the skyrocket, the revolving of the pinwheel, the eruption of the flowerpot, the shooting of balls by the roman candle.

Nothing will be wanting but the noises of the explosions and the cries and groans of those injured by their own or others' carelessness or recklessness. But the innocent noise the music of bands, the words of patriotic oratory, the cheers of spectators, may be substituted to good effect. For the hideous noises that have made too many Fourth's the occasions of nightmares instead of happy enjoyment no substitute is offered and none is wanted. Better on the 5th a whole boy or girl satiated with innocent amusement than one dead or wounded and threatened with deadly lockjaw.

Not long ago prominent New Yorkers got together and tested the coming electrical Fourth. They chose Riverside drive between West One Hundred and Sixteenth and West One Hundred and Twentieth streets for their test. They festooned 5,000 electrical lights from tree to tree and turned on the current. Many of the lights were inclosed in varicolored Japanese lanterns, and the effect was truly gorgeous. Standing at the lower end of the vista of lights and looking north, it appeared to an observer as though he were standing in a long lane of gigantic Christmas trees. "Isn't this beautiful?" exclaimed one man as he stood under the illuminated branches. "With a band to play here and perhaps a platform upon which the people could dance this would be far better than the old and dangerous displays of fireworks."

**For Private Illuminations.**  
To show what could be done in the matter of private illumination if the



Photos by American Press Association.

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Upper Left—Test of Street  
Illumination for New York's  
"Electrical Fourth."  
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owner of a house decided to give expression to his patriotic feelings the committee in charge of the display selected a house on Riverside drive and strung half a dozen chains of lights from roof to ground. The effect was very beautiful, although no attempt was made to outline the windows, doors, etc. There is room, of course, for the exercise of an unlimited quantity of taste and ingenuity.

The cost? Not greater than that of a medium sized fireworks display. In the case mentioned, when a half dozen strings of bulbs drooped from roof to

ground, it was estimated that it took \$10 for lanterns, lights and wiring and about 50 cents for current. In the New York demonstration the company supplying the lights and the current said that it could illuminate a city block on the night of the Fourth for about \$75. The company offered to the city free current for the electrical celebration.

The committee in charge of the city's Independence day jubilee expects to have \$100,000 to spend on a "safe and sane Fourth," and the electrical company estimated that all the parks and public buildings in the city could be il-

luminated at a cost of \$75,000. This, it was said, is not higher than the expense attending a good fireworks display.

**Movement Is Now National.**

The movement toward a rational celebration of Independence day has become national, said Herman Ridder, chairman of the committee in charge of New York's observance recently.

"The example set by New York has spread throughout the country. In 1929 there were only twenty cities in the United States that under-

took the supervision of the Fourth of July celebrations with a view of reducing the number of accidents that in the past have resulted from the observance of that day. The following year there were ninety-one, and last year there were 161. And in comparison with this increase the accidents of the day decreased from 5,361 in 1928 to 1,603 in 1931.

Of the committee can have the support of the people of this city the celebration last year, which was declared by every one to be the finest New York has ever witnessed, will be surpassed. The 'safe and sane Fourth' is an excel-

lent opportunity for the people of New York to show their loyalty to their city."

Even the folks who "believe in a real old fashioned Fourth" with guns and fireworks and bonfires, must find food for reflection in the warnings issued annually by the physicians and surgeons and heads of fire departments. Until the idea of observing the day without making our children "pass through the fire"—the practice condemned so severely in the Old Testament in connection with heathen rites—gained general acceptance Inde-

pendence day was something of a horror to the women and the pulpit.

Hearken now to the tale of decreased property loss. As a result of the adoption of the "safe Fourth" in New York two years ago the day's loss by fire has decreased more than 50 per cent and the number of fires which formerly marred the day's festivity have been almost completely eliminated. Statistics in Boston, Columbia's warship have become familiar with the passing of the years.

**Time to Say 'Stop!'**

Certainly it was time to call a halt. Statistics available inform us that in 1928 there were 183 dead and 2,883 wounded, a total of 4,113 left lying on the battlefield of Independence day. In 1929 the total rose to 2,176, although the fatalities had dropped to 182. In 1930 the fatalities were the same in number, but the injured were sufficient to bring the grand total to 2,466.

In 1928 the high water mark of injury and death was recorded. The total was 4,113, of whom 183 persons, mostly children, were killed. In 1930 the total was only a little lower, being 2,466, but there are fifty-five more graves in the cemetery of that year's "old fashioned Fourth." That was the last year attracted widespread attention, and the crowds for a safer Independence day, already having many followers, received a great stimulus. Not even the hideously sick call of dead and wounded was only half as loud. Last year saw a further decrease, the number of dead being only fifty-seven, the lowest number of which there is authentic record, and the injured were only 1,544, a total of 1,603.

It is that "only" that the "safe and sane" people are after. They argue that there is no need for the sacrifice of even a single life or eye or limb in the sacred name of patriotism, apart, of course, from the battlefield whereon one fights for his country.

**Put the Blame on John Adams.**

The blame for putting Adams on the wrong track is the matter of Independence day celebration is laid by these investigators at the door of old John Adams, second president of the United States, signer of the Declaration of Independence and a good, all round patriot. He told his wife in a letter that has been widely quoted that July 4 "will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, GUNS, bells, bonfires and illuminations from one end of this continent to the other. To all of which the present day reformers breathe a hearty and earnest 'Amen,' save to the words distinguished by capital letters. Guns and bonfires have been tried as means of celebration and have been found guilty. And if the reformers have their way, as seems likely, there will be no recall of this decision.

These intelligent busybodies, who save undertakers' fees and doctors' bills for parents, tell us that one need not live in a large city to have a "safe and sane" Fourth. They even go so far as to put the seal of approval on fireworks if the displays are safeguarded properly. There is no need of foregoing entirely the delights of gunpowder if care be taken to see that they are properly confined. But these safe and sane reformers by strenuous things as patriotic music, always effective, in stirring up love for the fatherland, speeches, games, parades, drills, tableaux, concerts, athletic contests and pageantry.

## "Have Some Terrapin?" Says Uncle Sam

It happened in a big city restaurant, one of the better sort of eating houses. A man and a woman were dining. She evidently "knew the ropes," he didn't. He took a glance at the bill of fare. "Say," he said to his companion, "what kind of a bird is a terrapin anyway?"

Let's mix up our metaphors, wilfully and joyously, and say that the terrapin is a rare bird (You and I know, of course, without looking at the pic-

ture or into the dictionary that she isn't a bird at all, but a kind of turtle).

But she's a rare turtle, so rare that even when she is well done the restaurant and hotels where they serve her charge from \$4 to \$5 for a portion.

Now, this sort of thing doesn't please your Uncle Sam, who thinks terrapin is well suited to be food for the masses. So he's going to try to popularize the terrapin, so to speak. In other words, he's going to try to put terrapin into

the laboring man's dinner pail as well as on the tables of the rich.

In the words of a recent report: "United States Commissioner of Fisheries George M. Bowers has set congressional mouths watering with his statement that in return for a small appropriation he will make diamond

back terrapin a staple for every cottage table. His plan is simply to start culture work on the neglected Malaclemmys palustris (the Latin name for the only genuine, simon pure dia-

mond back terrapin is the report from Nova Scotia that lobsters are so plentiful this year that prices will be cut in half."

When the terrapin is not busy trying to elude the men who want to sacrifice her on the altar of millionaire appetites she answers to the name of Malaclemmys palustris. There are other varieties of the Malaclemmys, but the palustris branch of the family is the only genuine, simon pure dia-

mond back terrapin. Just take a look at her back—look out for those jaws, please—and see whether it is marked with the pattern plainly discernible in the picture. If it has the diamond back markings of the real palustris you may order a portion in safety. Provided your pocket-book will stand the strain.

In the most expensive New York hotels recently terrapin was quoted at \$4 to \$5 a plate, but in the very, very exclusive University club, wherein no one is introduced unless he has a degree, or is introduced by a degree member, terrapin was listed at \$3. But—whisper it softly—it was reported that it was not the diamond back that was served in the beautiful gray building on Fifth avenue, but a more humble relative.

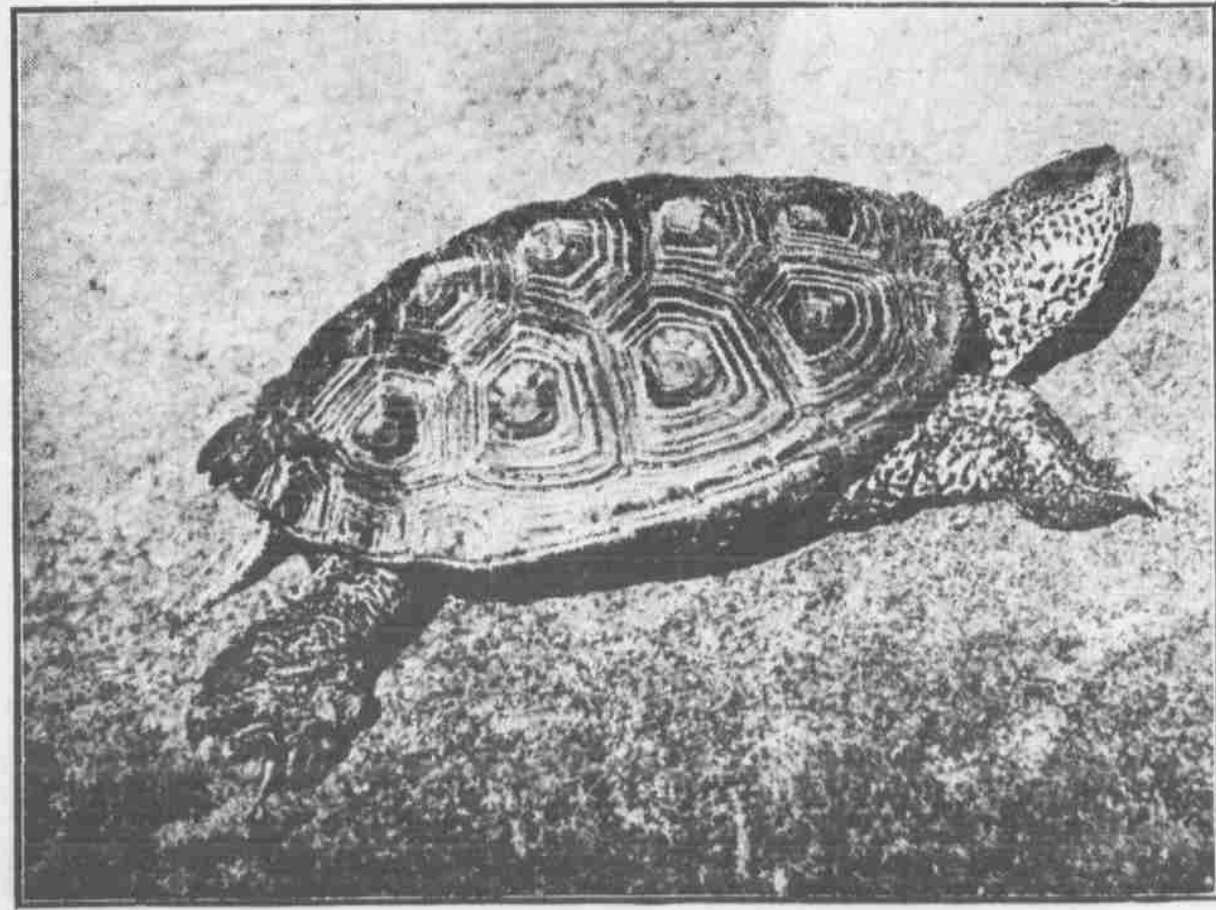
Let's learn a little about this aristocrat of the reptile world that costs so much per mouthful. In the first place, she is an inhabitant of salt and brackish waters, living in the marshes which fringe the North American coast from Cape Cod to Texas. The other terrapin, not the diamond back, are found sometimes in fresh water. The diamond back was formerly very abundant on her native marsh, but her toothsome-ness has been her undoing. The incessant extensive fishing to which she has been subjected has reduced her numbers and has raised her price. The principal fisheries are now in Chesapeake bay and on the coasts of New Jersey and North Carolina, but there are also artificial hatcheries in addition to the natural breeding grounds.

Although some terrapin are dug from the mud while hibernating, by far the larger number are captured by means of seines, traps, etc., during the summer months and are confined in pens where they are fed on oysters, fish, celery, soft shell crabs, etc., to improve the delicacy of their flavor. The terrapin commonly sold have a length of shell of from five to eight inches and are from six to ten years old. The terrapin does not submit easily to capture. When she feels the net drawing about her she tries her hardest to get away. She knows how to swim very well and even on land is swifter than almost any other variety of turtle or tortoise.

With increasing scarcity the price of the terrapin has mounted fast. Thirty odd years ago it was quoted sometimes as low as \$4 a dozen. Now \$10 a piece is considered a moderate demand, and J. P. Morgan, the connoisseur in terrapin as in other things of more intrinsic and less edible value, pays for his terrapin \$150 a dozen.

Throughout this article the terrapin has been referred to as "she." That is because in the terrapin family the female rules the roost. Her flesh is far more delicate than that of the male, and it is only the female terrapin that commands the big prices. Besides, the males do not attain nearly so large a growth as their mates.

BRUCE K. GORDON.



Photograph by American Museum of Natural History.

THE EDIBLE DIAMOND BACK TERRAPIN.

ture or into the dictionary that she isn't a bird at all, but a kind of turtle). But she's a rare turtle, so rare that even when she is well done the restaurant and hotels where they serve her charge from \$4 to \$5 for a portion. Now, this sort of thing doesn't please your Uncle Sam, who thinks terrapin is well suited to be food for the masses. So he's going to try to popularize the terrapin, so to speak. In other words, he's going to try to put terrapin into

Sis' Terrapin) in the department's laboratory at Beaufort, N. C., and then oversupply the market with the delicacy.

"Under present conditions the diamond back terrapin's eggs are exposed to all the vicissitudes of shore life, and few that are laid are hatched. This will all be remedied when the department starts its breeding system, and the result will be terrapin by the carload. Coming on the heels of these

mond back. Some restaurants that are first class in other respects are shameless regarding this matter. When you order terrapin there you are never sure that you will get Malaclemmys palustris or Malaclemmys centrata. Plain every day turtle of some other variety may be your portion.

Of course if you are permitted to see Mrs. Turtle before she gives up her young life to become a stew you may know when you are getting the genuine

## AMERICAN TEACHERS MAY ELECT ANOTHER WOMAN PRESIDENT

WHEN a woman is mentioned for the presidency of an association that is one of the greatest and most influential in America it follows as an obvious conclusion that she is not an ordinary woman. Such is the case of Miss Grace Charlotte Strachan, school official of New York, whose name has been brought forward prominently as that of a candidate for the presidency of the National Educational Association.

Miss Strachan denied with modesty recently that she was an aspirant for the office, but her admirers asserted that they would support her. She has earned nation wide recognition, they said, for her work in behalf of the women teachers of New York city.

The association will meet in annual convention in Chicago July 6 to 12. The members will discuss educational problems which have arisen in the past twelve months, and they will signify their appreciation of the work of some of the leaders by electing them to office. There is an unwritten law of the association which forbids the reelection of the president, so Carroll G. Pearce, superintendent of schools of Milwaukee, Wis., will vacate his place at the head of the country's school matters and manner. It may be that he will live in the annals of the association as the president who succeeded a woman, Ella Flag Young of Chicago, and was succeeded by another, Miss Strachan.

Two circumstances, one dependent on the other, have combined recently to bring Miss Strachan prominently before the educators and general public of the United States. The first was her carrying to a successful conclusion last year the fight, several years in the making, for "equal pay for equal work" for women teachers of New York. As head of the Interborough Association of Women Teachers of New York, Miss Strachan fought long and hard in legislative halls and out of them for her conviction that women who did the same work as men should receive the same pay. Her success, after many failures and discouragements, was heralded far and wide.

The second circumstance, to which reference has been made was the movement by the women teachers of New York to mark their appreciation of Miss Strachan's work in their behalf by presenting to her a large sum of money. The income was to make her financially independent for life. The amount of the fund to be raised was estimated at between \$100,000 and \$200,000. The money was to be raised by voluntary assessment on the women teachers who have benefited by Miss Strachan's activity. The highest amount named, \$200,000, is about the sum gained in one month by the women school teachers of New York through the



MISS GRACE C. STRACHAN.

equal pay law. But the rules of the board of education of New York, to which Miss Strachan is subject, of course, as she is a district superintendent of schools in Brooklyn, forbid the raising of money for testimonials to any persons in the employ of the board.

Miss Strachan is a woman of distinction in person and in achievements. Tall and well built, she radiates a sense of the power and determination that have stood well by her in the fight for recognition of the women teachers' claims. She has had several years of pedagogical experience, beginning her teaching career in Buffalo, where she

was born. She is of Scotch-Irish ancestry. She won her place as a teacher in the public schools of Brooklyn by standing highest in a list of 300 candidates after a severe competitive examination. Since 1920 she has held the responsible position of district superintendent after having served as public school teacher, member of the faculty of the training school for teachers, principal of a public school, teacher in and principal of an evening high school.

The convention of the National Educational association in Chicago will be the fifth in the history of the organization. WALTON WILLIAMS,